

A Short Textbook of Venereology. R. D. CATTERALL, M.R.C.P. London. The English Universities Press Ltd. 1965. Pp. viii+198. Price 15s. paperback; 25s. board.

Today, when the sexually transmitted diseases are on the increase, a book on venereology aimed at medical students and general practitioners merits careful review. This excellent textbook belies its title of 'Short'. The 191 pages of text are crammed with information, yet so well is it put together that the book is easily read.

In many ways a textbook on venereology is a textbook on medicine, with special emphasis on dermatology, for the sexually transmitted diseases attack every organ of the body and simulate many other conditions, especially those affecting the skin. Dr Catterall's emphasis on differential diagnosis is most noteworthy and it is here that he most obviously shows his capacity as a general physician as well as an expert on his own subject.

The book can be strongly recommended to medical students both as an authoritative account of venereology and for its value as an aid to general medicine; to general practitioners as a fascinating way of bringing up to date their knowledge of this increasingly important subject. The chapter on Other Treponemal Diseases, which might be brought to this country by persons from abroad, provides useful information to which one can refer if the necessity arises.

There are two statements in this book which this reviewer does not readily accept, two statements where the writer gives more weight to venereology than to general medicine. On p. 86 one reads "It is a good working rule in diagnosis, to suspect secondary syphilis in any patient with a generalized skin eruption, no matter what its appearance may be, and to test the suspicion immediately by serological tests for syphilis". This may be good practice in a V.D. Department, but would not be acceptable in most general practices. The second statement is on p. 180 where one reads "In secondary infection (of herpes zoster) antibiotics should not be used because of danger of masking the signs of syphilis". This too is open to argument.

Common Colds and Related Diseases. D. A. J. TYRRELL, M.D., M.R.C.P., M.C.Path. London. Edward Arnold (Publishers) Ltd. 1965. Pp. vii+197. Price 42s.

This is an account of past and recent clinical, epidemiological and virological work on this 'minor' but expensive malady by someone who might be termed a 'leader of the orchestra'. The arrangement of subheadings helps the reader to find his way through a maze of facts. For example, under each group or type of respiratory virus, there is a section on pathological changes with subheadings on 'tissue cultures', 'animals', 'serology' and 'association with disease'. Some other chapters deal with epidemiology, volunteer studies, virus isolation and measurement, and prophylaxis, treatment and management of cases.